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ABSTRACT

This document discusses the educational cycles of urban education from 1898 through the current thrust toward decentralization. Briefly, political exploitation for personal profit was followed by the theory that "professionals" should control the schools without "outside interference." The present revolution is a direct reaction to the failure of the "professionals" to provide an adequate education for the disadvantaged. This revolution is going in five directions: decentralization in administration; involvement in decision making by lay people whose children are in the schools; use of professional or semi-professional staff such as aides and community coordinators and agents; the appearance of the "community school" with expanded social and educational services; and, the emergence of radical teacher organizations which are demanding bargaining and decision making power. New York City's decentralization progress is discussed along with the proposed institution of 60 separate school districts. New Haven's experimental community school is also discussed as an excellent example of fusing city planning and educational and social service needs. (KG)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SETTLEMENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

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THE RISE OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN URBAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

by

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THE RISE OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN URBAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

by Mary Herrick

The emergence of a new philosophy of public education and its recent crystallization into legal administrative structures in some of the largest cities in the United States is of major significance in any study of urban problems and their possible solutions. Moreover, the new trend has appeared in some form in almost every major city of the United States, with the possible exception of those in the deep South. This change in direction has been caused by pressures both without and within the school systems, pressures which are certain to increase, not diminish.

Few people are conscious of the changing cycles in the history of public education, and a brief review of these changes sheds light upon the present trend. It has been assumed that the public schools have been the chief avenue of social mobility in the national history. This assumption is true. It has also been assumed that the public schools have offered, in the past, equality of opportunity to all children. This has never been true at any time; in fact, with all the glaring discrepancies visible today, it is more nearly true now than ever before, and the schools of today are in part the product of the schools which existed from 1865 on, as well as in part a response to the needs of our society in 1968.

One reliable source of information about these roots of today's schools can be found in a study of Chicago made in 1898 by a city commission of which William Rainey Harper, president of the new University of Chicago, was the head. The findings of his report could have been duplicated in any city at that time. The conditions they

describe give rise to the demand for "professional control of schools" against which the present drive for some "community control of schools" is directed.

In 1898, almost 40 per cent of the children in Chicago schools were foreign born and to most of them English was a second language to be learned in school. The schools provided no special help for these children, did not recognize either language difficulties or the European cultures and traditions of their homes, "which were opposed to the requirements of American citizenship."[1] Half of all the children left school by the fifth grade. Child labor laws were either non-existent or not enforced. Parents expected children to work to supplement their earnings as unskilled labor at $2.00 a day. But there were jobs for both parents and children.

"The situation," said Harper, "demands of teachers both broad culture and thorough training." But the elementary teachers in Chicago, as in other cities, were high school graduates or less, who had not been required to have any professional training before being thrust into class rooms with as many as 70 pupils, many of whom knew little English.[2] They were paid less than clerks in the stores. High school teachers had college degrees, but there were only 300 of them in 1898. As in other cities, the teachers had no tenure, were appointed, promoted, or dismissed at the pleasure of local politicians. Harper stated that any superintendent who raised objection to the inclusion of school jobs in the city spoils system would inevitably be dismissed.[3] Contracts spending millions for school sites, buildings, and supplies were dispensed on the basis of partisan politics and personal greed.

In Chicago, the superintendent had no control over expenditures and in fact over the school budget, when that was required, until 1947, only 20 years ago. As late as 1928, a mayor was elected on a platform of ousting a superintendent and did oust him.[4] Board members were occasionally sent to jail as in 1922, when some reform agency got after them.[5] Few citizens of distinction were willing to serve on boards of education had they been asked. In Chicago, Jane Addams and Raymond Robins in 1903, and Mrs. William Hefferan and James Mullenbach in 1924 were exceptions.

This then was what "community control of schools" meant in Chicago in 1898, in 1928, and in 1947. For at least half of the hundred years of urban schools in the United States in other cities conditions were similar. In Chicago, they lasted eighty years out of the hundred. But the cities were slow to object; parents accepted the schools as they were, and the political powers were not going to give up such a lucrative source of power willingly. There were still jobs for the children who attended the schools. Moreover hard work and native intelligence could enable boys to rise to positions of wealth and power without much education. But the technological changes which took place after World War I began to reduce these opportunities for social mobility. New skills were demanded; the number of jobs for the unskilled began to shrink. The federal government sponsored vocational education. High school enrollment in Chicago rose from 8,000 in 1900 to 141,000 during the depression, in a city with a relatively small increase in total population. Schools everywhere were overcrowded, classes were large, tax money reduced. During the depression when uncertainty of employment was a general problem, however, the schools were not blamed for the failure of children to get jobs.

The last twenty years after World War II have presented a very different problem to city schools. Employment for the unskilled has virtually disappeared in the onrush of technological change. European immigration had almost ceased after World War I and the bulk of city population had become second and third generations of European stock who considered themselves 100 per cent Americans. There had been a trickle from the South, which grew into a flood during the war and thereafter, mostly Negro, but some "poor whites." Technological changes in agriculture drove them from "40 acres and a mule," and from sharecropping into the cities for work. Negroes came, too, to escape from segregation and repression in the South, hoping to find in the better schools in northern cities, the kind of opportunity for their children which they had never had. Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in varying numbers entered cities also. Most of these new migrants had never had even real agricultural skills and were completely at a loss in the machine economy of the cities, except in the lowest paid, most insecure service jobs. Welfare rolls mounted. Men tended to disappear from families they could not support. Restrictive covenants until 1948 hemmed in Negro ghettos, and poverty and the prejudice of second generation immigrants, still unsure of their own status, kept the barriers up and used violence to enforce them. Conversions of old buildings into crowded, unsafe tenements with high rents took place in every city. As the more affluent white people moved to the suburbs, the pressure of Negro population pushed the lower income whites toward the edges of the city, and the segregated Negro areas spread gradually, sometimes block by block.

Since the original ghettos were in the older areas of the city,

the schools were also apt to be old, discouraging in appearance and less well equipped than newer buildings. Many teachers sought assignment in the newer buildings, closer to their own homes. Gradually, the segregated Negro schools filled up with a large proportion of less experienced or uncertified teachers. The Negro parents who had trusted the city schools had now deposited the unsolved problems of 400 years of slavery or near slavery on the northern city schools, which lacked the resources, the understanding, the imagination, and the courage to meet the challenge.

The city schools after World War I, and particularly after World War II, had enough problems to meet without those posed by centuries of race prejudice. The tremendous increase in enrollment, as high school graduation, not fifth grade, became the accepted level of school learning, was not matched by corresponding increases in tax resources. Public education was considered the responsibility of state governments; but in every state urban representatives were outvoted by those from rural areas, traditionally distrustful of the "evil cities," with no high opinion of education generally, and a very low opinion of the new migrants for whom they were asked to provide more funds and greater opportunities than they or their children had had. Local property taxes are still the major resource of local school districts in all but a few states. As the more affluent moved to the suburbs, as city structures aged, and as tax exempt highways, public housing, and public buildings took up increasing space in cities, the value of taxable property per child decreased in the cities, and increased in the suburbs. Cities are still commonly discriminated against in state formulas for distributing state aid. New York City gets 25

per cent of the state money for 34 per cent of the state's children, including those most in need of special help. Chicago gets less than the wealthy suburbs per child, both in state aid and maximum tax rates allowed, because its high schools are in the same district as the elementary. The Detroit Board of Education has recently entered a suit against such discrimination against its schools, asking that the whole state system of school support be declared unconstitutional.[6] Teachers' salaries lagged behind those of workers with comparable training. Class loads, already too high, sometimes even rose and fell very slowly. The auxiliary aids now considered necessary for modern techniques of instruction, psychologists, counselors, nurses, and school social workers are everywhere in short supply. There was no extra money to provide special help for the children in Negro ghettoes.

Not only had the school population changed by World War II; the second cycle of school philosophy had come about as a reaction against the crude political exploitation of the first half of the century of urban education. Now education was becoming a "science," and required "professional control" and noninterference by lay outsiders. College degrees were to be required eventually of all teachers, although most teacher training courses remained narrow and uninspiring. A "professional superintendent" must control school finances, curriculum development, and assignment and promotion procedures. Since the superintendent knew what was good for the schools and the children, lay boards of education should give him all possible freedom and support him. Testing of children on achievement became rigid, and hastily given I Q tests assigned children to five "tracks." As the general training of teachers increased, they claimed, too, to be "professional" and entitled to some share in decision-making on educational policy,

instead of being mere clerks to carry out orders. Disputes between teachers and superintendents grew more frequent. But the professional administrator was in most areas the unchallenged director of the public schools for some thirty years and was under no obligation to be concerned with community forces in most American cities. When the American Association of School Administrators on February 18, 1968, claimed that a court decision infringed on the "historic prerogative" of school staffs,[7] they had forgotten how short a time in history such authority had been their "prerogative."

One major change which did concern life outside the school buildings did take place in the same period as the development of "professional control." As enrollments grew and expensive new buildings were constructed, pressure to use the huge school plant more than five or six hours a day grew also. Schools were opened after school and during the summer in most cities for adult education and for recreation. Business leaders, school staffs when there was money, and people who used these opportunities all approved of "lighted school houses." These programs tended to follow stereotyped patterns. Rarely did the people in the neighborhoods served have anything to say about what they were offered; but it did not occur to them to question what the schools did about anything. The lighted school houses served good ends, and their programs will inevitably be extended rather than decreased. The most elaborate system of such services is now found in Flint, Michigan, and is paid for by a private foundation.[8] Flint has called its schools "community schools" because of the range of services offered to residents, and has set up a national organization to interest cities in extending such services.

But the "lighted school houses" did not prove to be avenues of social mobility to the low income Negroes in the great cities. Gradually their faith in the northern city schools, from which they had hoped so much, ebbed. It became clear beyond a shadow of doubt that their children were not getting the same education as other children in the city and were increasingly unable to compete in a world where the Negro was supposed to have to be better than the others in order to have a chance at success. They would not have cared, had they known, that the schools had never given the children of low income people as good an education as those of the more prosperous. "In the old days," there were jobs for everybody. But today a high school education or more was a prerequisite for anything but a blind alley. The Negro community saw the mass of Negro children put in lower "tracks," for those up to three years below grade level in reading and arithmetic. A graduate from a segregated Negro high school might have ninth grade reading skills, and be unable to do skilled work even if he got the chance. The drop-out rate of Negroes from high school was higher than that of others, as students were unable to meet the demands of the high school curriculum and saw no real reason for trying to, since employment rates for Negro graduates differed little from those of drop-outs. A graduate of a segregated Negro high school ~~usually~~ frequently had to take remedial work if he got to a college. There was no argument about these facts. The newspapers published them in every city where the superintendent would release them.

The textbooks and curriculum in general made little sense to ghetto children who saw no reason to try to master them. They expected to fail. Impatient and discouraged teachers who tried to make overcrowded class : meet standards which had no meaning to the children

met open resistance. Many teachers showed clearly they did not believe that children could learn. The faith in city schools with which Negroes had come North turned into hostility and bitter resentment, and a conviction that they were helpless to keep their children from growing up into a permanent lower class, shut out of the mainstream of American life.

They began in every city to make militant demands upon school administrators and Boards of Education. In a few cities the superintendent, in his lofty professional isolation, simply ignored them with ultimate disastrous results. In most cities some efforts were made to meet the demands. The Negro spokesmen began with the basis of the 1954 Supreme Court decision that segregated schools could not be equal, and that segregation did permanent damage to the "minds and hearts of children." Many cities tried experiments to achieve integration, and in a few, like Evanston, Illinois, it really succeeded. But in no large northern city did the experiments on open enrollment, bussing out of the ghetto, dividing grades between schools on the fringe, regional high school plans, proposals for educational parks and magnet schools actually change the lives of many children, white or Negro, although those who were a part of them may have had helpful experiences.

The Negro population grew by migration and natural increase. It continued to spread into older, formerly white areas. Middle class white families, afraid of the low standards so well advertised of segregated Negro schools, sent their children increasingly to parochial and private schools; and in city after city, the proportion of Negro children in the public schools rose far beyond the ratio of Negro to white in the total population. By 1967, elementary schools in Baltimore were 64 per cent Negro, in Chicago 56 per cent, Cleveland 53 per cent, Detroit 57 per cent, Philadelphia 60 per cent, St. Louis 64 per cent

and Washington 93 per cent. First grade enrollment in New York City was 52 per cent Negro and Puerto Rican.[10] As the proportion of Negro children increased, the hope of well organized integrated experiences faded too. Moreover, some of the experiments had made clear that physical propinquity was not integration, that many Negro children needed more help than any children were being given, and that precipitate and unplanned integration might discourage rather than motivate Negro children.

Then the cry became an insistence on compensatory education for underprivileged children if immediate integration was not possible for all. Smaller classes, better books, widening experiences at all levels, Operation Headstart to help first graders start without handicap, these opportunities should be extended to all children. Such hopeful experiments as Higher Horizons in New York and the Banneker District program in St. Louis were widely publicized. Today they have lost their funds and have been accused of being only surface cures. The most effective single experiment in compensatory education today is the 60 or so "More Effective Schools," bargained for in the United Federation of Teachers' collective bargaining contracts in 1965 and 1967. This type of school is being copied by teacher demand in a number of other cities. In these elementary schools no class is over 22, and in each school of a thousand children, there is a full time nurse, psychologist, a parent coordinator, a school social worker, and one-fourth of the services of a psychiatrist. These schools cost over $400.00 more per child than the other elementary schools in New York.[11] A recent study of the M.E.S. schools sharply criticizes their results.[12] However, the recent publication of basic achievement levels in all the schools in New York, in which the M.E.S. schools were

starred, indicates a higher level than in neighboring schools.[13] Some states have appropriated special funds for compensatory education. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was primarily to help children in low income areas. But the total available from all sources is not sufficient, and it seems politically impossible to decrease present sums for higher income area schools in order to increase the money for the less favored economically.

No time should be wasted on arguments as to whether integration or compensatory education is better for children. If immediate integration seems to be impossible for most Negro children in cities today, certainly efforts to improve the schools they now attend and will continue to attend should be redoubled with no decrease in the effort to achieve real integration where possible. Certainly many Negro leaders have apparently arrived at this conclusion and have gone so far in distrust of white leadership as to demand complete control of segregated schools themselves. The Urban League of New York City has announced that it will seek legislation to separate Harlem schools from the rest of the school system and to demand funds adequate to their needs.[14] The rising political bargaining of segregated Negro areas, the developing "New Breed" of Negro political leadership, and the awakening response of masses of the hopeless to the cry of "Black Power" gives muscle to such proposals. In any case, the revolution now going on in large city school systems derives not all but much of its impetus from the fury with which Negro communities are rejecting the results of a generation of "professional control" of schools, and the frustration of the people in city slums who feel they are nobodies, who have nothing to say about anything in their lives and communities, and who are deeply angry at the prospects facing their

children.

The theory that the "professionals" should control the schools without "outside interference" was a direct reaction to the decades of political exploitation for personal and partisan profit. The present revolution is a direct reaction to the failure of the "professionals" to provide even passable educational opportunity to the children of the underprivileged who now constitute so large a proportion of the people of our cities. The revolution is going in five directions which tend to coincide. The first is decentralization of administration. The second is the involvement in real decision making by lay people whose children are in the schools. This may be done by local official boards or by informal groups. The third is the use of professional or semi-professional staff who are not teachers, whose service is to act as liaison with the communities who use the schools. The fourth is the appearance of a new category of city schools called "community schools," which add to the "lighted school house" idea the actual involvement in planning not only community enterprises but actual instruction by the people whose children are in the school. The fifth is the growing insistence of teachers, through the collective bargaining process, on having their experience and judgment used in making educational policy.

New York City has moved farther toward decentralization than has any other urban center. By formal action the Board of Education has made the district superintendent in each of the 30 districts the operating head of the some 25 elementary, intermediate, and high schools in his district.[15] He has the right now to make many decisions without reference to the superintendent at 110 Livingston Street. Each still has on the average more than 30,000 children and 2,000 teachers

to manage, more than the total of many good sized cities, but the impersonality of central control has been diminished and the staff now assigned to district offices has the possiblity of closer human contacts and more rapport with principals, teachers, children, and communities in which they work. The division of large systems into districts is now common; but the division of authority is not.

Decentralization of itself might be merely an adminstrative device to increase efficiency. In New York it has gone much farther. The district superintendent is now required to submit many of the decisions he is authorized to make to a district school board.[16] This board has power to reject his proposals, both on personnel and policy. The 11 members of each local board are chosen by the city-wide board of education from nominations submitted by a screening panel appointed by the district superintendent from the major civic and parent organizations of his district.[17] Such local boards in most school systems are purely advisory and in many cases consist of "safe" people, who will cause no trouble, appointed by a district superintendent. Unless the boards have some power, and unless they are actually chosen in some fashion by the community they are to represent, they are window dressing. Since the boards of education in almost all large cities are appointed by the mayor, rather than elected after enormously expensive or party-controlled campaigns, actual participation in local areas is all the more important.

The New York plan for local school boards makes provision for local boards in an area smaller than one of 30 districts if a community requests it. One of the most dramatic results of the decentralization plan is the local board now operating in the area of Intermediate School 201 in Harlem. After a boycott and extended conflict, the board was

set up according to the general plan and is now actively participating in decisions in the school.[18]

There are independently chosen advisory committees in other cities than New York. When Mitchell Sviridoff was president of the Board of Education in New Haven and later of the urban renewal, anti-poverty agency, Community Progress, Incorporated, in whose program the schools were firmly interwoven, election of community advisory committees was an essential element.[19] In Detroit the Miller Project serving several schools in the East Side Negro area has an elected advisory committee.[20] In Chicago, there is one elected advisory committee, notable for a number of reasons. With the help of the director of the school's Bureau of Human Relations, the district superintendent in District 20 enlisted the voluntary service of teachers in the 17 elementary schools of the district to organize block units of parents in 1965-1966. These block groups elected representatives to local school advisory committees, and the local school committees elected a district committee which has been energetic and useful. They have funds earned from managing films in an old theater in the area with 2000 seats. These films are recommended by the curriculum department and tickets are sold in the schools.[21] District 20 is of particular interest because it is a kind of neighborhood which is bound to become more numerous as Negro populations spread. Its area changed rapidly from middle income white to lower income Negro. There were no settlement houses or other social centers in the area except one YMCA. The social life of the original community had centered around large Catholic and Protestant churches, whose plants and programs the newcomers could not afford to operate. The school system was the only agency which touched the whole community; the only agency capable of organizing it into a real community which could

voice its many common problems. The district committee is working hard toward getting a grant for a youth center for the area and is actively involving teen-age groups in its plans.

The decentralization situation in New York is now confused by the submission by a distinguished panel, appointed by Mayor Lindsay, of a much more far reaching proposal than the original plan. Headed by McGeorge Bundy of the Ford Foundation the panel included Francis Keppel, recently U. S. Commissioner of Education, Mitchell Sviridoff, erstwhile of New Haven, and Bennetta Washington, head of the Teachers Corps after a most useful career in the schools of Washington, D. C. The mayor had appointed the panel to justify his further efforts to get more funds for New York schools from the legislature. This proposal goes so far as to propose the replacement of the present nine-man Board of Education by a three-man commission with greatly curtailed authority, and the creation of as many as 60 separate school districts each completely run by a district superintendent. One of the significant changes proposed in the Bundy plan concerns the choice of local school boards. Instead of nominations for all 11 local board members by the screening panel appointed by the district superintendent according to the formula, only five of the eleven would be so chosen and the other six would be selected from nominations made directly by the parents of children in the local schools. The mayor, not the general city Board, would make the choices from these nominations. The total administration of the schools in the district would be in the hands of the district superintendent and the local board. The Board of Examiners would be abolished and each district would make its own rules for selection, assignment and promotion of teachers, and for texts and curriculum content. If the present nine-member

Board of Education were kept, five of its members would be elected by the local district boards, not appointed by the mayor from nominations of the screening committee of civic organizations set up by legislation. Alfred Giardino, present president of the New York City Board of Education, was a member of the panel and voted against the recommendations. No action has as yet been taken on the Bundy proposal.[23]

The third new direction which urban education is taking is in the employment of non-teaching community workers. These may range from aides employed with OEO funds, who at their lowest level of usefulness are only messengers for a principal, to certificated personnel from whom at least high school education is required, to trained social workers recruited from university graduate schools of social work. Chicago has OEO aides called community representatives. They are chosen by the principal in the school they serve. Philadelphia has a community coordinator in every elementary school "serving a large number of pupils living in pockets of poverty." The project has been funded by the ESE Act. These coordinators take an examination and are certificated. They must have a high school education or equivalent, must be residents of the area they serve, and must have demonstrated leadership in that community. On the oral boards which interview those successful in the written examination are some representatives of the community to which the coordinator would be assigned.[24] Detroit has a much more elaborate system of "community agents," with a much higher level of training required. Salaries are paid commensurate with those of teachers. Plans for their work were developed with the assistance of the Graduate School of Social Work of the University of Michigan, and the

agents have been recruited from the Graduate School of Social Work of Wayne University and at Ann Arbor. After the riot of August, 1967, the number of community agents in Detroit was increased from 33 to a total of 178, more than half the elementary schools in the city.[25] In a special area like the Miller Project on the Negro East Side, there may be more than one in a school. Here they work directly with an advisory committee elected by the community. While their salaries are comparable to those of teachers, they are not yet certificated employees. They are responsible not only to a local principal but also to a Coordinator of Community Agents in the central office. It is clearly stated that the community agent is not merely to be an envoy from the schools to defend their work; he is to be free to be a voice of the community as well. He is not only to try to change the fear and hostility which many parents have toward the schools; he is also to try to change the attitudes and procedures within the schools which cause the hostility. Detroit has moved farther than any other large city in the theory and practice of employing community workers who are to bring about two-way communication between the schools and alienated communities. But the use of such workers at some level is becoming common. St. Louis has community coordinators in 96 schools.[26] Los Angeles reports 19 "school community relations consultants."[27]

The fourth pattern developing combines the first three into a new kind of school called "community schools." The "community school" of the 60's has decentralized control, independent advisory committees chosen by the community, personnel to work with both school and community, and a building corstructed to house many services other than

the instruction of children. New Haven has offered the prototype for this kind of "community school."[28] Planned as an essential part of a city-wide urban renewal and war on poverty, the community schools in New Haven serve all ages, many kinds of social needs, and make a special effort to give free opportunity to the people of a neighborhood to work on any of their problems,not merely those of schools. Federally funded vocational training operates through and with the cooperation of the school system. Funds are furnished to the schools not only by a new state aid for low income areas, by the ESE Act, but also directly from Community Progress, Incorporated, the overall planning group. The city Department of Parks pays for one recreation director for each school. CPI pays for a group social worker assigned to a neighborhood center but working directly with a school. The school system pays for two 12-month assistant principals, one to work on improvement of curriculum and instruction, and one to work on the community program. Though the original funding of the plan by the Ford Foundation has lapsed, state and federal funds and enthusiastic increased local support have made possible its continuation.

The success of the New Haven experiment has had an impact on much larger cities. Mitchell Sviridoff was a member of the New York Bundy panel. Edward Logue, one of the original New Haven planners, has been at work in Boston for some years. Boston is now planning "community schools" on the New Haven plan, according to its superintendent,[29] with the advice of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and of the people in whose communities the schools are to be located. Philadelphia already has four community schools of the New Haven variety and is planning more as fast as funds and buildings are available.[30]

The fifth direction of the current educational revolution is in the insistence of the emerging militant teacher organizations that they be involved in decisions on educational policy as well as in negotiation on salary and working conditions. The insistence of the United Federation of Teachers on the addition of 20 more "More Effective Schools" to the original 40 prolonged the strike of September, 1967, after other matters had been agreed upon.[31] Impatience with the failure of schools to meet the needs of children has been widespread among teachers the country over.

The revolution to include parents in disadvantaged areas in decision-making in schools faces explosive problems. First of all, it seems to say that the bitterly attacked, segregation-enforcing neighborhood school is after all the best pattern and not a reprehensible idea at all. Since the defense of the "neighborhood school" has been the mainstay of segregationist parents and administrators against any of the efforts toward integration, will this apparent sanction of it hinder future plans? Many Negro leaders, accepting reluctantly the unlikelihood of any extensive, meaningful integration for years, are now settling on neighborhood schools as the sensible target of their demands for improvement, since this present generation which needs so much help has only one chance at education. Yet eventual integration cannot be given up as a goal if there is really to be equality of opportunity and racial peace in the United States. Will the second generation immigrant segregationists who say, "We made it! Why can't they?" have more ammunition to block integration than before? If the Negro parents can insist on Negro history in their schools, do the segregationists have the right to have their interpretation of race relations taught in their neighborhood schools? The Bundy panel faced

this problem directly by providing that whatever was the form of the central school authority in New York City, it would have specific power to overrule the action of any local school board taken in contradiction to the city-wide policy of increasing racial integration.[32] The possibilities of conflict inherent in any emphasis on neighborhood schools is obvious.

However, supporters of the new type of "community school" do not accept the idea that its possibilities are limited only to the "neighborhood school." They feel that parents can be and should be involved in any kind of a school whether it be an educational park, a magnet school, or a part of an urban-suburban exchange. They say a community is made of people with some common ties and goals and not a space. The involvement of parents of all kinds of children in these integrated schools would in itself be a significant contribution.

A second problem centers on the desperate need for more funds for underprivileged areas. State funds are negligible. The large appropriations for the ESE Act, when siphoned down to local school systems, is hopelessly insufficient in the great cities. It seems politically impossible to demand that prosperous neighborhoods reduce the per capita expenditures for their children in order that the less privileged children may have more. Are we not creating more frustration in Negro areas unless we can find more money? Perhaps spreading understanding of inequitable tax systems may make them easier to change, but such changes are slow. Negroes want something <u>now</u> for their children.

Will increasing competition for trained teachers, now in such short supply, result in improved teaching in low income areas or the reverse?

Will the universities and other teacher training institutions produce the kinds of teachers and administrators needed, and produce them fast enough?

Can enough trained community workers be found to give competent liaison between schools and communities?

Will there not be wasteful duplication of effort in decentralized school systems in preparation of curriculum and in other school service?

Should we not be widening tax base areas to include metropolitan areas instead of seeming to encourage fractioning of present areas?

There are no immediate answers to these questions. But the questions are no more difficult than others to which answers have been found in the past. At least the questions deal with the major social issues of our day and must be answered in other relationships in our society as well as in public education. The answers may even be different in one city from another. Yet one significant factor is clear. The involvement of those now hostile and alienated in any real effort to solve their own problems will help to make whatever solutions are arrived at more acceptable to them.

Whatever the difficulties, the genie is out of the bottle and will not return to it. Public education in the cities of the United States -- and the cities are increasingly the nation -- is being shaken out of its old pattern. Administrators, teachers, and boards of education no longer can retreat to their lofty isolation and ignore their obvious failures. The new directions are far-reaching in their implications, not only for public education, but for the social health of the nation.

Mel Ravitz, a knowledgeable city councilman of Detroit, has some thoughtful comments on the new trends in urban education. "If the school is to fulfill its function of reaching and teaching the next generation, it must be the agency that preeminently concerns itself with the total experience of the neighborhood or community in which it is located. People must be helped to overcome their prevailing attitude that schools deal with unrealistic matters and that their children are merely required to spend a certain time there before moving out into the real world."...

"A comprehensive community organization related to schools would be of immeasurable benefit to a community. Were there only one thing I could do to strengthen a community and improve its educational and civic government, I would set up a community organization program with organizers in every school in the system backed with sufficient auxiliary personnel. I would then await the heartening result of the gradual participation of the people in the building of curricula, in the shaping of civic policies, in their open involvement with the schools and with the city. From the viewpoint of one who believes deeply in the democratic process and in the right of the people to know, to speak,and to organize, nothing could be healthier for our society."

"That such action would precipitate shock, dismay, some confusion, and innumerable changes, there is no doubt. But that is precisely what our school system and our communities require most at this point"[33] in our history.

Public schools in American cities are definitely entering a new cycle. May they achieve the goals they now seek with more than "deliberate speed"!

FOOTNOTES

[1] William Rainey Harper, Report of the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago, 1898, p. 66.

[2] Ibid., p. 65.

[3] Ibid., pp. 41, 118

[4] George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago, pp. 268, 276

[5] Ibid., pp. 262-263.

[6] Chicago Sun-Times, February 4, 1968.

[7] Ibid., February 19, 1968.

[8] Mott Program of the Flint Board of Education, Flint, Michigan, 16 pp. ill.

[9] New York Times, November 2, 1968, pp. 1, 50.

[10] Joseph Alsop, "No Nonsense About Ghetto Schools," New Republic, July 22, 1967, pp. 18-23.

[11] Ibid., p. 21.

[12] Public Education Association of New York City, Report Card, November, 1967.

[13] New York Times, November 2, 1967, p. 50.

[14] Ibid., November 22, 1967.

[15] Board of Education, City School District of the City of New York, Decentralization Statement of Policy, Adopted April 19, 1967.

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17 Ibid.

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19 Community Progress, Inc., The Human Story 1966 (New Haven, Conn.), pp. 6-11.

20 Miller District Project Newspaper, Detroit Public Schools, December, 1966.

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28 Gregory Farrell, A Climate of Change. The New Haven Story (New Brunswick, N. J.: Urban Studies Center, Rutgers University), April, 1965.

29 Letter from Superintendent of Boston Schools, William H. Ohrenberger, October 31, 1967.

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[31] American Teacher, October, 1967, p. 20.

[32] National Committee for Support of Public Schools, Special Report, December, 1967.

[33] Mel Ravitz, The Schools Role in Community Organization. Speech given at Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, January 24, 1967, 5 pages mimeo.